Statement

Operational holdings

(Nos. in 00)

State	Marginal Farmers		Small Farmers	
	1976-77	1980-81	1976-77	1980-81
West Bengal	35,021	40,960	10.826	11,490
Orissa	16,751	15,600	10,435	8,910
Bihar	71,154	83,210	11,910	12,180
Madhya Pradesh	19,781	21,030	10.953	12,260
Uttar Pradesh	1,17,734	1,25,720	27,814	28,980

Rise in prices of edible oils

85. SHRI VIRENDRA VERMA: Will the Minister of FOOD AND CIVIL SUPPLIES be pleased to state:

(a) what is the percentage of rise in the prices of edible oils during the last six months (till date) stating the reasons for the continuous rise of the prices of edible oils;

(b) what is the percentage of rise/fall in the import of edible oils during the last six months (till date) and the extent to which it has been responsible for speculation in the edible oil prices; and

(c) what measures have been taken by Government to check the continuous speculation of edible oil prices and also to remove pressure on domestic supplies?

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND THE MINISTER OF FOOD AND CIVIL SUPPLIES (SHRI H. K. L. BHAGAT): (a) The percentage rise in the six months starting from the week ending 18-4-1987 to 17-10-87, in the prices of edible oils is 19.6. The reasons for rise in prices of edible oils is due to the onset of lean season, shortfall in crop production on account of widespread drought and festival season.

(b) The percentage of rise in the import of edible oils during the last six months of the oil year 1986-87 (Nov.—Oct) is 31.3 per cent. Increased imports of edible oils are expected to wield a stabilising influence on the overall oil prices in the country.

(c) The following measures have been taken by Government to check price rise and reduce pressure on domestic supplies:

1. State Governments have been advised repeatedly even at the level of Chief Ministers to take action against speculators and hoarders and other such anti-social elements.

2. Allocations of imported edible oils to the public distribution and vanaspati industry have been increased.

3. Credit control on edible oils and oilseeds has been tightened.

4. Voluntary price control of vanaspati and discussion with oil industry with a view to stabilising prices of oils.

5. Stock limits for oilseeds and edible oils have been reduced under the Storage Control Order.

Indo-US agreement in Agriculture

86. SHRIMATI KRISHNA KAUL: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether any agreement between India and US had recently been reached